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Excavating Animal Planet's *Lost Tapes* : The Unruly Images of a Posthuman Counter-Archive

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EXCAVATING ANIMAL PLANET'S *LOST TAPES*: THE UNRULY IMAGES OF A POSTHUMAN COUNTER-ARCHIVE

ZOË ANNE LAKS

Résumé : Cet article explore le point où la cryptozoologie, les études archivistiques et la recherche en éthique animale se rencontrent, pour tâcher de révéler le potentiel théorique de l'image animale soi-disant « rétive ». Relisant attentivement les épisodes de *Lost Tapes*, série de documenteurs présentée par la chaine Animal Planet (2008–2010), l'article soutient que les images d'animaux résistent aux modes archivistiques de l'utilisation (ou de la réutilisation) et de l'appropriation parce qu'elles résistent à l'activation archivistique. Par leur caractère obstinément factuel, ces images refusent l'appropriation métaphorique pour devenir des chimères animales – elles refusent de représenter davantage que ce qu'elles sont. En tant qu'images d'archives demeurant inertes et immuables, ces images indisciplinées s'opposent aux impulsions archivistiques, tant instrumentales qu'anthropocentriques, et ouvrent, en définitive, une voie vers l'évaluation de la fonction et du potentiel théorique d'une contrearchive posthumaine. Dans cette perspective, les matériaux archivés conservent une relation éthique avec leurs homologues du monde réel, vivants et morts, selon une éthique plus large du soin et de la responsabilité archivistiques.

Mots-clés : théorie des archives, documenteur, documentaire parodique, télévision, cryptozoologie, éthique animale, esthétique, *Lost Tapes*, posthumanisme

Abstract: This article explores the unique intersection point of cryptozoology, archive studies, and research in animal ethics to draw out the theoretical potential of the so-called "unruly" animal image. Through a close reading of Animal Planet's mockumentary television program *Lost Tapes* (2008–2010), this article argues that images of animals can resist archival modes of (re)use and appropriation through their resistance to archival activation. In their stubborn facticity, such images refuse metaphorical appropriation to become animal chimeras—to stand for more than they are. As archival images that remain inert and immutable, these unruly images work against both instrumental and anthropocentric archival impulses and ultimately offer a path toward evaluating the function and theoretical potential of a posthuman counter-archive. According to such a perspective, archived material maintains an ethical relationship to its living and dead counterparts in the world, according to a wider ethic of archival care and responsibility.

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Keywords: archival theory, mockumentary, television, cryptozoology, animal ethics, aesthetics, *Lost Tapes*, posthumanism

Animal Planet's television series *Lost Tapes* is a fictional found-footage program that aired between 2008 and 2010. Its anthology-style narrative vignettes revolve around the conceit of cryptozoology: the study of mythical and legendary monsters. Through a combination of mythmaking and pseudoscience, *Lost Tapes* stages first-person encounters with fictional creatures ("cryptids") in a mockumentary and horror-style format. *Lost Tapes* ran for three seasons and focused on a new creature each episode, including, for instance, the Yeti, the Jersey Devil, and the Bear Lake Monster, as well as skinwalkers, aliens, and zombies. Despite airing its final episode more than a decade ago, as of the time of writing, the series continues to boast an extratextual fictional archive in the form of an online bestiary on Animal Planet's website, offering additional information about each mythical animal featured throughout the series' run. *Lost Tapes* joins in a new surge in fascination with cryptids over the past several decades,[1] including a rise in television and YouTube programming over the past fifteen years in particular. Such programs as PBS Digital Studios' *Monstrum* (2019–), the History Channel's *In Search of . . .* (2018–2019), and National Geographic's *Naked Science* (2004–2011) have explored cryptozoological inquiry in a pseudo-educational format. This recent spate of programs follows on the heels of a longer history of cryptid representation that hit its stride largely in the early 2000s,[2] though the spirit of this fascination with mythical beasts dates back to a wide variety of other types of representation.[3] Bigfoot and Yeti narratives serve as a sub-genre in and of themselves, with film adaptations of these popular figures also growing in popularity since the early 2000s.[4] *Lost Tapes* takes a unique approach to its modern-day representation of mythical creatures by weaving its staged found-footage re-enactments along with stock archival animal footage, talking-head interviews, and artistic drawn and animated renderings of its cryptids.

What can we take away from this wider trend in popular media, which remains, as of yet, underexplored in academic literature in film and television studies? Despite widespread denigration as a discipline, cryptozoology provides unique insights into Western cultural attitudes toward non-human animal representation and the natural world more broadly. In the context of contemporary consciousness around climate change, scholars have suggested that one function of the modern fascination with cryptids is to alleviate our guilt around the destruction we have wrought and continue to wreak on the biosphere, by positing that there remain creatures safe and insulated from our ecological impact.[5] One incentive for studying cryptozoology, then, may be to better understand its function as a cultural barometer for our anxieties around climate change. The way in which cryptids are represented remains an intriguingly underexplored

area of research, especially as it permeates a wide range of popular culture and remains a staple within the Western modern mythos about the natural world.

Scholars since the 1970s have debated the scientific validity of cryptozoological exploration, a field that emerged as a quasi-academic area of research from within the frameworks of natural history and anthropology.[6] More recently, scholars have begun to explore how cryptozoology may offer a critically useful avenue for exposing the ideologies and aporias within Western epistemological and ontological frameworks, for instance through its ability to bridge into ways of knowing outside conventional scientific approaches. By way of an example, in different studies, Sharon Merz,[7] Bettina E. Schmidt,[8] and Penelope Bernard[9] each explore how the Western idea of the cryptid overlaps with many Indigenous and traditional ontologies—as Bernard puts it, experiences with these different orders of reality expose "the limitations of science in its current format."[10] Other related literature follows this thread of how animals yet to be discovered offer the potential to destabilize ontological and taxonomic categories, ultimately pointing toward the provocative idea that "the reality of animals is a matter of perspective."[11] So while *Lost Tapes*' particular brand of cryptozoology is far removed from the realm of scientific rigour (as a result of its uneasy blend between science and fiction), the wider practice of cryptozoology remains an (arguably) theoretically and scientifically viable practice. As Martin T. Walsh and Helle V. Goldman point out in their taxonomic examination of cryptozoology, despite widespread academic and scientific dismissal, the quest to find undocumented species is not an inherently unscientific process.[12]

Following this line of thinking, which aims to take the questions raised around the practice of cryptozoology seriously, this article treats *Lost Tapes* with the understanding that cryptid representation remains an underexamined fixation of Western culture that has much to say about the way in which we think about animals and the natural world. In this way, I conceive of *Lost Tapes*' overarching cryptozoological framework as a creative epistemological zone and a productive liminal space, which serves to open up conversations about both extant and fictional animals within what I conceive of as a posthuman archive.[13] Through a close reading of *Lost Tapes*, we will confront the ideological and ethical implications of the series' attempts to use extant animals in order to imagine fictive animals through an archival mode.

More specifically, I argue that in the context of this framework, which questions seemingly basic assumptions about fact, fiction, cryptid, and animal, *Lost Tapes*' appropriation of audiovisual archives, specifically animal stock footage, points us toward a posthuman counter-archive. I define such an archive as a collection of materials that works against traditional anthropocentric assumptions about what an archive is or can be, as both the animals and the audiovisuals used to represent them assert themselves as ends in themselves, an idea that I explore through an animal studies paradigm. As James Leo Cahill has suggested, animals

and their impenetrable interiority can serve to "reveal the cracks and fissures in our symbolic systems"[14]; this self-same fissuring effect takes place through *Lost Tapes*' deployment of archival imagery—its archiveological method—which attempts to wrangle footage that is recalcitrant to the series' attempts at re-appropriation and re-contextualization. We can thereby recognize that these archival images of animals might emerge as "unruly" counter-archival material in their resistance to the series' efforts to "activate" them.

In contrast to our conventionally utility-based attitudes toward both animals and archives, then, these unruly images open up the possibility of non-instrumentally determined, care-based ethical relations to both the animals these images represent and to our practices of using and understanding archives. Through an appeal to animal studies research and the recent so-called animal turn, which emerged in the mid-1990s in academic discourse,[15] this discussion thereby takes on a posthuman bent, exploring how the boundaries that define the human being—along with all other types of animal beings—are ultimately constructed. In the spirit of Donna Haraway's seminal account of the cyborg, this article thereby offers an examination of this blurring of identifying boundaries as well as an imperative for us to recognize our own role and responsibility in constructing and maintaining those boundaries.[16]

Analyzing *Lost Tapes*' animal counter-archive thus makes a critical move toward recognizing cinema's Copernican vocation[17] in its decentring of the priorities of the human through an attention to animal images, bodies, and ways of being. As we will see, this program offers a unique opportunity to think through how we use animal imagery in a way that is usually taken for granted as existing for our own ends. In the discussion that follows, we will explore through a close reading how and why these "unruly" images operate within the wider project of the series, before turning to an examination of what this project has to say about the function of animal images in archives as a posthuman enterprise more broadly.

INTRODUCING *LOST TAPES*: HYBRIDITY, VISIBILITY, FACTICITY

Before diving into how *Lost Tapes* opens up the possibility of a posthuman archival mode, it is worth exploring how the program functions, both in a narrative and formal sense, and how its archive of animal imagery works within this wider context. In each of its thirty-four episodes, *Lost Tapes* crafts dramatic portraits of its cryptid subjects using a variety of techniques, including, and most especially of relevance to this discussion, through the re-appropriation of audiovisual archives of animal stock footage. To play out the series' proposed analogy, where cryptids are made to resemble real-world animals in part or in likeness, *Lost Tapes*' structural rhetoric relies on the logic of the chimera, a

mythical animal hybrid that is premised on the non-specificity of animal bodies. The series thereby proposes that a new mythical creature can emerge through a process of heterogeneous amalgamation.

It is important to note, then, that there are two layers to *Lost Tapes*' archival representation—first there is its overarching fabulative-mythical archive of cryptids, realized through its online bestiary and staged fictional encounters, and then there are also the pre-recorded stock footage archives of extant animals that undergird *Lost Tapes*' wider fictional archive. This latter deployment of archival material is primarily what concerns this discussion. The series sources stock footage from various archives, though it chiefly relies on Discovery Access: the audiovisual archive for Animal Planet's parent company (Discovery Inc.). Discovery Access, which has since partnered with Getty Images, at time of writing hosts over 130,000 stock videos and B-roll footage, consisting mostly of short documentary-style clips of nature and animals. Every episode of *Lost Tapes* makes use of this archive along with other sourced animal footage, most often as a form of visual analogy, metaphor, and illustration of their mythical beasts.

The pilot episode of the series ("Chupacabra") serves as an archetypal example of how the series deploys its archival footage. The episode repeatedly replays archival tapes sourced from the Sherriff's Department in Cuero, Texas, specifically one clip that depicts an animal (which resembles a coyote) scampering away down a sandy road. At one point in the episode, a member of the Sherriff's Department states in voice-over across this footage, "I've seen a lot of mangy coyotes in my day, and that is not a coyote." Along the same vein, at different points in this episode, several shots of stock footage of bats from Discovery Access are also used, with text layered atop them, reading, "The Chupacabra is said to drain its victim's blood and sometimes suck out internal organs. Another animal that drinks the blood of its prey is the Vampire Bat. It can consume half its body weight in blood in a single feeding." Through both association and analogy, then, *Lost Tapes* attempts to merge its representations of live animal bodies with mythical ones, positing that the Chupacabra both is and is not a coyote, is like and unlike a vampire bat, using only the visual logic of synecdoche to invite its archival footage to stand for something more. In later episodes, this strategy is supplemented with added visualizations in the form of sketches and animatronics.

In this sense, *Lost Tapes*' analogical rhetoric bears some resemblance to the practice of anthropomorphism, which attempts to render animals legible through their perceived and imagined commonalities with human beings. Since Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman published their seminal collection *Thinking with Animals: Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* in 2005, several scholars have weighed the cost of erasing animals' alterity against the theoretical potential of anthropomorphism as a critical praxis.[18] As Kari Weil puts it,

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> On the one hand, as a process of identification, the urge to anthropomorphize the experience of another, like the urge to empathize with that experience, risks becoming a form of narcissistic projection that erases boundaries of difference. On the other hand, as a feat of attention to another and of imagination regarding his or her perspective, it is what brings many of us to act on behalf of the perceived needs and desires of an other/animal.[19]

Such metaphorical associations thus threaten to erase the supposedly constitutional difference between human and animal, all the while inviting an empathetic pathway to confront the alterity that non-human animals represent as a whole. It is through this very same logic that *Lost Tapes* creates commonalities between its animals, rendering both extant and cryptid animals explicable by analogical association.[20] By visually representing cryptozoology in this way, the series offers a polemic on the epistemological and ontological implications of taxonomic classification in a broader sense, as such rigid orders humans regularly impose on the world do not necessarily correspond to the world itself. *Lost Tapes*, as an archetypal example of cryptozoological inquiry, then, plays in the interstices between animal species, challenging the boundaries between the knowable, inexplicable, and supernatural.

However, as we will see, this space of fantastical, dramatic questioning is continually undermined by the series' use of stock animal footage, even though it is deployed in support of *Lost Tapes*' wider project: namely, to return to the truth of an (un)recoverable mythical past represented by its monsters. This project in fact has much in common with many earlier representations of mythic beasts and it resonates with cryptozoological impulses more broadly, which often function as a compensatory indulgence in mystery in response to our "over-explored, over-tamed, and over-understood" modern world,[21] essentially reconstituting the myth of the American frontier in the modern era.[22] *Lost Tapes*' cryptids are often associated with ancient prehistoric beings—for example, the Monster of Monterey is visually associated with a dinosaur, the Devil Dragon is drawn from Australian Aboriginal legends, and the Thunderbird is a figure taken from many Indigenous peoples' histories and cultures. In order to sustain belief in this project, to maintain a balance between this ideal to return to a time of legend and the project of representing that quest, the series appeals to a sense of visceral bodily presence as evidence for the existence of these mythical creatures.[23] Such strategies fall in line with a wider logic of corporeality within the new digital landscape, where excessive viscerality and bodily presence often serve as compensatory mechanisms against fears of digital disembodiment.[24] One purpose of these representational strategies, then, is to place these monsters of legend into our recognizable world, allowing them to "come alive" on the screen. The series thus employs three mechanisms that lend bodily authenticity to its cryptids, each of which I expand upon briefly below—its materially

based found-footage aesthetics, its rhetorical promise of visibility, and its reliance on the facticity and interchangeability of animal bodies.

Lost Tapes lends a sense of visceral reality to its cryptids through its fictional and archival found footage, which relies on analog markers to draw attention to the materiality and veracity of its images. At various points throughout the series, *Lost Tapes* draws attention to the mediated nature of its representations through its staged diegetic outtakes and mock surveillance and webcam footage, as well as, when confronting its cryptids, consistently using a shaky handheld camera, black-and-white filters, and glitches and audiovisual distortion (static, colour bars, visible grain).[25] These visual effects are related to Hito Steyerl's concept of the "poor image," which demonstrates particular purchase in the horror genre; for instance, Shaunak Sen has applied Steyerl's concept to discuss the idea of digital spectrality, writing, "The lower the resolution and the hazier the footage, the scarier (and 'truer') the video feels . . . . Its vocabulary is that of the *grab-footage*, an image recorded purely for *functional* use that accidentally (and thereby, objectively) unveils specks of phenomenon activity from our everyday that we seem to have passed unnoticed."[26] In the same sense, *Lost Tapes*' poor images lend a visceral basis to the show's narrative, where its potential for affective charge is borne directly from its believability—if we feel fear, on some level, we know these images to be real (and vice versa). Through an appeal to horror affect, then, *Lost Tapes* mirrors the phenomenological basis for much of cryptozoology, which relies on the notion that "cryptids become real, become 'persons' to be known through lived experiences."[27]

Just as the series attempts to locate the supernatural and mythic in a materially embodied aesthetic of presence, the conceit of the program is also fundamentally premised around a promise of visibility that is constantly frustrated by the need to maintain these monsters within the realm of myth. The series' introductory sequence voice-over proposes that *Lost Tapes* works in search of evidence of "hidden" creatures, which can be uncovered only through the revelatory capacity of the camera lens: "There are creatures science refuses to recognize. But new technology makes us question what is real. If our eyes see it . . . If our cameras capture it . . . Does it exist? Enter a realm where fact meets fiction, science meets legend, where nightmares come to life. Do you believe?" The series' title sequence is also prefaced with an advisory warning that similarly sets up an expectation that the program will depict "graphic" imagery: "The presence of hidden creatures is the subject of continued debate. The following story is inspired by the possibility of their existence. Some viewers may find the material to be extremely graphic and disturbing. Viewer discretion is advised." Such an expectation is continually frustrated, however, as the series' cryptids are often visible only by implication—as a glitch, or a shadow in the darkness. Despite *Lost Tapes*' pledge of visibility, its cryptids thereby come to occupy a position of representational breakdown. This is because the cryptozoological

mythical creature must exist only outside representation—if it is rendered visible or if it becomes scientifically recognized, then the cryptid becomes just another animal.[28]

In this way, the fictional staged encounters directly support the series' foundational interplay between visibility and invisibility. The fictional aspect of these creatures' potential existence is not obscured by the show itself (a title card flashes "FACT VS. FICTION" in each introductory sequence), the result being that the entirety of the program exists in a wavering state of simultaneous plausibility and deniability, as befits its cryptozoological framework. In the effort to balance the two, *Lost Tapes* embraces this heterogeneity, separating its narrative segments from its pseudo-educational portions, which include talking-head interviews and stock footage. *Lost Tapes*' archival footage of animals thereby becomes aligned with the series' appeals to scientific truth, as a result of this footage being offset by pseudo-factual text overlays and interviews with experts. As we will see, this is where the program ultimately fails to uphold its careful balance between fact and fiction, as a result of the pure facticity of the sourced stock archival images, which results in this footage always standing apart from the episodic narrative.

As we saw with "Chupacabra," the series uses animal footage as a visual anchor for its fictional creatures, otherwise largely visible only through immaterial sketches. This reliance on extant animals is founded on the premise of the visceral corporeality of animal bodies in a general sense. The fundamental facticity of animals in audiovisual animal representation has been well recognized by scholars writing at the intersection of animal and moving-image studies. As Sarah O'Brien points out, the very medium of cinema, borne from Eadweard Muybridge's and Étienne-Jules Marey's studies of animal locomotion, is in fact premised on "the conviction that animal bodies *are* facts (and facts alone)."[29] On-screen animal bodies thereby become representable through their promise of visibility—both in their capacity for movement and cessation of movement.[30] James Leo Cahill echoes this sentiment, writing, "Film footage of animals tends to always have a strong documentary element to it, invested with a sense of presence rather than representation, particularly when showing the death of an animal."[31] Death thus ironically becomes the ultimate promise of facticity, the truest evidence of an animal's existence.

Indeed, in addition to relying on stock footage of live animals, *Lost Tapes* also continually repurposes images of dead animals to serve as indexical evidence of the off-screen presence of a mythical creature (e.g., images of slaughtered goats with their wounds exposed, as well as various small rodents and birds). Occasionally, even human actors' bodies become evidence for cryptozoological attacks. However, where the human body is always individuated and narrativized, taking on recognizable characteristics or trope markers (such as the sadistic bear poacher who is dispatched by Bigfoot in the seventh episode of

the first season), the dead animal, as in taxidermy, "takes on an overwhelming facticity—it becomes a specimen, standing for itself or for a category of animals like it, and not for the 'being' which 'inhabited' the living body."[32] Sarah O'Brien has previously explored the deeper psychological rationale behind this trope of animal bodies serving as evidence of death in film, concluding that this trope promises bodily validation in the face of the representational aporia of death.[33]

The strategies that *Lost Tapes* takes up toward its live and dead animal bodies thereby work directly in contrast to the series' related use of animatronics—its animal costumes, puppets, and CGI imagery used to bring its cryptids to life. Animatronics is generally defined as the practice of making animals and other beings move through robotics, puppeteering, and animation and can be understood as an offshoot of the practice of taxidermy, both of which involve the "creation of 'liveness' in animal display."[34] All of these three animatronic methods of animal representation in *Lost Tapes* serve as substitutes for stock animal footage when live images of animals cannot perform their necessary function as a visual anchor or analogue, often because of the distance of the analogy (for instance in the case of moths in relation to the legend of the Mothman) or when no analogue is possible (as with the case of an alien). *Lost Tapes*' animatronics thereby animate its fictional creatures in a fundamentally different way than its stock footage does, as these constructions become infinitely malleable and repurposable in contrast to archival material's facticity. In his discussion of digital animals, Paul Sheehan sums up such a distinction when he writes, "Unlike real animals, computer-generated creatures can be fully manipulated, controlled and anthropomorphized,"[35] whereas in today's landscape of digital filmmaking, footage of live animals now serves as a relic of a "lost real that is slowly vanishing before our eyes."[36] These digital stand-ins therefore work only as an immaterial substitute for the verification power offered by the live animal image.

However, even as the series attempts to access some sense of mythical pre-digital and pre-historical truth through this logic of viscerality and visibility, at certain points, the individual pieces of *Lost Tapes*' archival amalgamation threaten to collapse under the weight of their heterogeneity. The facticity of the animal images that are used end up overturning the balance between visibility and invisibility, instead remaining flatly visible and profoundly unmalleable, disrupting the drama, viscerality, and overall tone of the program. This is because the archival animal footage is set at odds with its epistemological function in the show's narrative and wider project, in its inherent resistance to its chimerical role. Thus instead of serving demurely as metaphorical stand-ins for their cryptid analogues, *Lost Tapes*' archival animals resist metaphorically or synecdochally standing in for more than what they are, as a result of their pure facticity. Indeed, as Akira Mizuta Lippit has famously stated of on-screen animal representation, "animals resist metaphorization."[37] It is therefore the facticity of the archival footage of animals that ultimately undermines *Lost Tapes*' project to

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realize its cryptids, even though the show also relies on this facticity to provide a visual anchor for its depiction of mythical creatures.

The fifth episode of the first season ("Thunderbird") offers one example of how such a breakdown in analogical rhetoric and formal coherence occurs. Stock footage of birds of prey are repeatedly used as an analogy for the Thunderbird, including images of hawks, eagles, condors, and even at one point a digitally rendered pterosaur. These images resist functioning chimerically as stand-ins for the Thunderbird because they become detached from the dramatic narrative as a result of their heterogeneous facticity. The footage structurally interrupts the story, and this results in a tonal clash between the predominant affect of dread in the staged encounter with the cryptid and the more neutral observational documentary gaze of the archival footage.

The episode's narrative depicts three boys lost in the woods who must defend themselves against the attacking Thunderbird, which remains only indirectly visible throughout the re-enactment as a shadow in the trees, drawing on the same interplay between visibility and invisibility, viscerality and frustration, that defines the program's wider attitude toward its fictional creatures. The staged encounter is filmed using a handheld camera, which formally conveys the boys' panic and fear, as they anxiously make their way through the forest in the darkness. During this encounter, the episode cuts from this dramatized narrative directly to stock footage of a bald eagle in the treetops, then one catching a fish, then another ripping the flesh off a carcass, with a factual text overlay describing the vision and gliding speeds of birds of prey before it cuts back to the fictional narrative. This visual interruption of pure facticity, in the form of both animal image and text, is a contrast not only in tone and genre but also in visual style, as the narrative nighttime footage sits heterogeneously next to the daylight stock footage. This messy animal interruption is but one example of how the facticity of *Lost Tapes*' archival animal footage renders these images resistant to re-appropriation, unruly as instrumental material, an effect that is allowed to emerge because of the clumsy patchwork nature of the program's archiveological method.

Catherine Russell has described archiveology as a practice of filmmaking involving "the reuse, recycling, appropriation, and borrowing of archival material,"[38] a process which often yields intriguing compilations.[39] Her theory offers a new perspective on found footage, understanding it to be a critical form of media use[40] that becomes, in the spirit of Walter Benjamin's writings on history and archives, "a means of shocking the past into attention."[41] The way in which *Lost Tapes* mobilizes its archiveological practice, its re-appropriation of archival material, as we see in "Thunderbird," often results in a tonal and functional mismatch of footage styles, which allows the series' archival material to take on new meanings, precisely in its resistance to being re-appropriated and re-contextualized. *Lost Tapes*' archival footage thereby becomes causally and narratively

disconnected from the series' project to uncover these "hidden" creatures by process of synecdoche, and instead, these images emerge as unruly. In this way, as other scholars have observed in various contexts, "the move to invest animals with a resolute facticity always folds back on itself"[42]—in *Lost Tapes*, the attempt to re-appropriate animal images works against itself when those images are positioned as a source of epistemological certainty.

Another way of understanding *Lost Tapes*' attempts at re-appropriation of its archival material is through its relationship with time and human history. Pierre Nora's account of *les lieux de mémoire* provides a means of approaching this question, as his theory describes the fragmented modern-day remains of our prior "undifferentiated" form of memory and ability to access the past. This is because, if animals are, as John Berger has claimed in his seminal account on looking at animals, in some sense representative of "an intercession between man and his [sic] origin,"[43] or associated with a now-receding past reality,[44] particularly in contemporary Western culture (*Lost Tapes*' market audience), that ability to access such an animal past has waned in today's urban Western world, which marginalizes animals to ancillary and domesticated spaces of dwindling importance to anthropocentric society.[45] Indeed, as noted above, this is potentially a major drive behind the fascination in cryptozoology as a form of compensation.

To Nora, any sense of a mythical prehistoric past, such as that represented by Berger's intercessional animals, is no longer accessible in urban society in the West today; as he writes, "so have we gone from the idea of a visible past to an invisible one; from a solid and steady past to our fractured past; from a history sought in the continuity of memory to a memory cast in the discontinuity of history . . . . Given to us as radically other, the past has become a world apart."[46] In these terms, *Lost Tapes*' project to mobilize its animal archival footage as a chimerical hybrid is doomed to failure because our access to a mythical past of animalicity is always reconstructed and fundamentally fragmented in the modern urban Western world. Fictional and extant animals become doomed to clash in a series that attempts to use the latter to depict the former. And thus what *Lost Tapes* is attempting to index through its archival images is thereby in some sense unrepresentable: the pure pastness of myth itself. Thus it is not simply a capacity for metaphor that is denied in the facticity of animal bodies but also any sense of their anteriority, as filmed animal bodies remain endurably and materially present, even as the animals themselves are perpetually pushed further to the margins of modern societies.

UNRULY IMAGES OF ANIMALS: USES AND IMPLICATIONS

So far, I have suggested that *Lost Tapes*' archival images, in their resistance to homogenization and re-appropriation, might be productively understood as "unruly." Like Juan Carlos Rodríguez's and Tarek Elhaik's incurable image, their

term for biodeteriorated archival material that demands new ethical standards of care,[47] the unruly image also resists common-practice modes of treating archival material; in Rodríguez's and Elhaik's formulations, incurable images act against the hegemony imposed by traditional curation praxis,[48] and in a similar way, unruly images resist attempts to be wrangled by curators, preservationists, and mediamakers-as-archiveologists. Thus the unruly animal image also becomes directly related to Paul Sheehan's conception of animals as "anti-cinema." He writes that animals threaten the attempts of feature filmmaking to control entropy and contingency in the filming process,[49] and as a result, as he puts it, "Animals in feature films are thus always to some degree 'troubling,' as they break through the falsely protective aura of the image, the aura that rules out the accidental and the unintentional."[50] Like Sheehan's "troubling" animals, the unruliness of animal archival imagery is difficult to control, resisting attempts at being activated via archiveological praxis. Whereas in other cases archival activation may enable archived images to break free of their original narrative constraints,[51] *Lost Tapes*' attempts at activating its archive—rendering its images chimerical and metaphorical—threaten to fall flat in their attempts to gesture beyond these images' facticity.[52]

The unruly image contains some aspect that is excessive, something that stands beyond its expressed function and renders it resistant within its particular archiveological context and configuration. In the case of *Lost Tapes*, the excess of its archival imagery—here animal facticity—leaks out in the rift between mockumentary segments, where a dialectical space opens in the clash between science and legend, fact and fiction, animal and mythological beast.[53] Since it is a mockumentary, this type of heterogeneity is already baked into the program's patchwork formal structure; however, *Lost Tapes* is not playful or ironic in its appropriation of archival material—as detailed in the previous section, the series makes strides to bring its mythic animals to life, as animal subjects that are both visceral and visible, representationally integrated into *Lost Tapes*' dramatic (as opposed to comic) narrative. However, the interruptions of animal footage in particular defy the rhetorical logic of the program, as it attempts to create a myth of pure pastness, to balance fact with fiction, and to affectively engage its spectators, and yet its use of animal images serve to interrupt each of these endeavours through their pure facticity.

The amalgamative, heterogeneous visual language that *Lost Tapes* relies upon is of course also common to many representations of mythical beasts, and in a broader sense the threat of formal rupture is always possible for an audiovisual medium that relies on editing that chops up, inserts, and juxtaposes various images. For instance, readers may consider Ray Harryhausen's famous stop-motion Dynamation monster sequences in *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* (Nathan Juran, 1958), *Jason and the Argonauts* (Don Chaffey, 1963), or *Clash of the Titans* (Desmond Davis, 1981), films in which the action sequences threaten to divide

planes of action and shot relationships as a result of their variety in material sources. In the case of such Harryhausen sequences, however, the scenes' heterogeneity might be said to be smoothed over as a result of the films' fantastical tone and narratives. In contrast, *Lost Tapes* struggles to contain these moments of tension.

Aesthetically heterogeneous imagery such as the examples explored above opens up points of rupture between images that do not facilely fit together, though the stated degree to which texts are successful at smoothing over those ruptures is of course culturally contingent as well as relative in terms of the audiences' own interpretations. Where one viewer may find rupture, others may not notice the rift, and thus the degree to which an image is unruly is as much a description of a formal logic as it is also a reading strategy. Such a strategy would have the viewer treat these animal images with a fundamental openness, as pure interruption to our anthropocentric narratives—as ends in themselves rather than as means to our ends. Thus, in the case of *Lost Tapes*, where the rupturing imagery depicts animal stock footage, this rhetoric of heterogeneity opens an opportunity for hermeneutic power to transfer from the editor to the images themselves, though this is also a function that must be *read for* on the part of audiences. This combination of image and viewer is in fact essential in interpreting this series, because meaning is not inherent within the image itself but is instead produced dialectically, in the exchange between media text and audience. If we so choose to participate in such a reading, we might then adopt a posthuman framework, allowing the images to refuse their function as archival material in a way that resists anthropocentric thinking. *Lost Tapes* thereby offers us an opportunity of adopting a new perspective, one that allows us to reconsider the naturalized way we have come to treat both animals and archives in media representations.

And so, in parsing how unruly images work in television and other media forms, it becomes clear that they do not simply result from the images in themselves; it also becomes important to consider how they are used. In other words, unruly images will always function as context dependent. The resistance of these unruly images is thus both formal and hermeneutic in nature—we may recognize that the program creates friction in its editing structure, exposing a heterogeneity in how each image works alongside its neighbours.[54] Images may also be unruly to varying degrees, as this term as I have proposed it essentially works as a measure of an image's resistance to re-appropriation.[55]

Lost Tapes, too, presents a scale of unruliness. While the "Thunderbird" episode discussed earlier offers one of the series' most unruly archival images, other episodes' use of archival animal footage operates less radically. For instance, the deployment of python and anaconda stock footage in the "Megaconda" episode (Season 1, Episode 11) and the centipede footage in the "Death Crawler" episode (Season 2, Episode 5) do not operate with the same

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degree of excess in their facticity and resistance to re-appropriation. This is likely because less metaphor is necessary in referencing these cryptids because of their visual association with extant animals, a process which in these cases involves only an imagined scale change. Here, then, animal bodies serve as a visual point of reference for mythical creatures more readily, and the archival animal footage thereby functions as less unruly.

And in fact, *Lost Tapes* itself acknowledges this unruliness, as we see the program attempt to contain the disruption posed by its archival animal footage as the series goes on. Attempts are made throughout the series' run to homogenize the tone of the program across the narrative and pseudo-educational segments, for example through attempts to dramatize the stock footage and occasionally even the talking-head interviews by adding various "poor image" filters and digital colourizations (as with adding a red glow to animal eyes). In season two, *Lost Tapes* begins to rely on less archival animal footage, and when it does, the series often offsets the disruptive potential of its animal imagery by using expert interviews as mediators. In so doing, the series attempts to smooth over the excessive facticity that renders these images heterogeneous within the narrative structure of each episode.

For instance, in the fourth episode of the second season ("Werewolf"), the fictional narrative depicts investigators searching for a werewolf inside a suddenly and supposedly empty house, before cutting to a talking-head segment: paranormal investigator and skeptic Dr. Joe Nickell states in voice-over, "The werewolf has the ability to shapeshift, that is, to metamorphose, to transform himself at will." Then footage of biological anthropologist Dr. Jessica Lynch Alfaro cuts in to explain, "Usually when we think of the term 'metamorphosis' in the animal kingdom, you can think of things like chameleons who change colours, or octopus also can change its colour based on the colours that are around it . . . ." As Alfaro speaks in voice-over, the visuals source stock footage of a green chameleon on a branch and a camouflaged octopus as direct illustrations. Here her invitation to "think of" these analogues for metamorphosis in the animal kingdom mitigates the disruptive threat of these images of chameleon and octopus bodies as potential chimeras for the werewolf, using the figure of the expert as an interpretive mediator. This interruption is also justified by some connection to the narrative progression itself, as the talking-head interviews serve to explain what might have happened to the seemingly vanished cryptid. This potential threat of unruliness is thereby contained by the series' attempts at smoothing over the heterogeneity of its archiveological practice.

While *Lost Tapes* goes on to contain the power of its unruly images as the series continues, this case study nonetheless leaves us with provocative questions about the wider implications that such images and their functionality as an archive pose for both archival studies and media studies alike. First, it is important to recognize that *Lost Tapes*' attempts to contain the unruliness of its archival

images are not simply operating on a representational level. Given that these are images of animals which index real animal bodies in the world, these moves to homogenize or contain the unruly animal image also can be understood within the wider context of the material conditions that were involved in the production, circulation, and re-appropriation of these images, specifically the history of human exploitation and instrumentalization of animal bodies. Thus the attempt to contain the unruly potential of animal images might read as an analogue for wider human treatments of animal bodies, premised around a model of containment and instrumentality. Indeed, attempting to discuss animals as simply "pure representation" would disavow the material history of animals and the ways in which we have put them to use over time.[56] Thus when we discuss representations of animals in both archives and histories, it becomes crucial to consider how they might both reflect and potentially also challenge our modes of engagement with animals, both human and non-human, living and dying in the world, and what ethical responsibility these images maintain with regard to the subjects they index.

As we go on to consider the theoretical framework undergirding *Lost Tapes*' use of unruly images, images that invite us to consider them constituting a posthuman space, one outside that which is allotted for them in conventionally anthropocentric archives and archival practices, we might thereby aim to uncover new perspectives around the question of human–animal relations. For instance, as opposed to treating archival images as simply ready-made for re-appropriation and re-activation, an archival image that emerges as unruly demonstrates the potential to both remind us of the ideological and material circumstances of an image's production and activation, as well as propose new ways forward for the future of archival praxis. As Catherine Russell argues, archiveological work can yield surprising possibilities for building new relationships:

> In archiveology, images from diverse sources are juxtaposed, and they are also organized and structured so as to produce new knowledge about cultural history, including how that history was filmed and what films it produced . . . . The objective is to produce new modes of thinking about the past, which . . . is also about futures that did not happen, or previous futures we may still encounter.[57]

I propose that in their resistance to being re-contextualized, re-appropriated, and put to new uses, *Lost Tapes*' unruly images invite consideration on the place of instrumentality in archives—in other words, they offer the chance to reconsider our assumptions about the predominance of an instrumental and utility-based relation to archival material. Unruly images of animals offer a case where a less instrumentally determined perspective on archival material becomes theoretically and practically salient, or otherwise critical to consider.

As I have suggested, this question of instrumentality becomes especially crucial in the case of archival animal imagery, but this idea also responds to the case of contemporary digital archives more generally, as we have now found ourselves facing an overwhelming level of access to an unprecedented amount of archived material. Today, the rhetoric of "free" and open (though actually materially contingent) access to digital archives has become increasingly prevalent in our age of digital storage and wireless connection. Digitally archived material is now conceived of as a knowledge commons, as its proprietary rights are distributed as a shared resource.[58] In such an environment, the logic of easy access and freedom in our ability to re-appropriate archival material seems assumed to the point of being self-evident. However, in admitting the possibility of unruly archival material that is resistant to our attempts to make use of it, we might be made to challenge our assumptions about easy access to this (seemingly) freely available archived material. If we acknowledge that at least some of these archives in their sheer volume of data cannot possibly continue to exist for the sake of their use-value to human beings, future or present, but simply as a consequence of our wider compulsions to preserve and collect material, we are forced to consider whether another form of relationship may be necessary to constitute our connections to and responsibility for such archives.

The unruly archival image thus adds an additional dimension to the debate surrounding the conflict between access and preservation, long raging in archival studies. In Caroline Frick's words, even professional archivists "continue to struggle with moving beyond their now 'traditional' binary opposition in which preservation poses an opposition to access."[59] While considering unruly images as part of this debate offers no easy answers, it might reconfigure the way in which scholars and archivists typically approach this question of weighing an archive's use-value in the present versus its potential use-value in the future. This debate between preservation and access often results in the assumption that we should be learning how to make better use of archives; however, in considering archives that productively resist being re-appropriated and put to use, as is the case of an unruly posthuman archive of animal images, we might add to this debate a third axis, an alternative to consider beyond the binary of preservation and access: care, or responsibility to those archives, as ends in themselves, outside of anthropocentric concerns. What does it mean to take care of an archive that denies its own usefulness to us?

Such an idea is modelled on other care ethics frameworks developed in animal studies over the last several decades. Care ethics proposes adopting a respect for others according to a deontological framework, where an agent might treat other entities according to the idea that they have intrinsic value.[60] Along a similar vein, Kari Weil describes care ethics as "a concern with and for alterity, especially insofar as alterity brings us to the limits of our own self-certainty and certainty about the world."[61] As opposed to viewing them as instruments to be

used, then, according to such a perspective, animals and other non-human entities (including archives) might be treated as ends in themselves, with respect to their own functions as individual entities existing in the world.[62] In animal studies, this approach reflects the ideals of the so-called liberationist movement, which Tzachi Zamir describes as a perspective that both seeks to avoid exploitative unequal power relations between human and animal and values the life and freedom of individual animals equally to anthropocentric concerns.[63]

While in some respects extreme, adopting such an attitude with respect to archival animal imagery may support this wider liberationist project, by cultivating non-anthropocentric and non-utilitarian attitudes toward animals and their archives more broadly. As opposed to treating animal images according to their utility, we might instead consider them affectively and thereby cultivate recognitions of animal agency and intentionality by promoting an affective, care-based phenomenological perspective toward them rather than a utilitarian one.[64] In the case of *Lost Tapes*, the series' unruly images that remain inert, that resist or outright refuse to be put to use, invite us to consider whether we may have an ethical responsibility to these animal images even if we cannot make use of these archives to anthropocentric ends.

While animal images are simply representational indices for living animals, we also can recognize that in many cases, audiovisual archives can in fact remain ethically responsible to their source material. For example, in the case of historically marginalized human individuals and groups whose culture and identities were appropriated through historical practices of exploitation including slavery and colonial enterprise, archived (i.e., stolen) cultural and personal effects and artifacts, anthropological photography, and human and animal remains, for instance, each perpetuate normalized exploitative relationships between archiver and archived. Accordingly, we might ask to what extent these archived materials might work to undo these relationships through their continued existence in the world. In the case of animal images, the archive that refuses to be mobilized serves exactly this purpose: to disrupt the hegemony of anthropocentric use and abuse of animals.

In a similar way, examining the wider debate on privacy in archives, including the so-called "right to be forgotten," tells us that all archived material can indeed maintain an ethical relationship with its indexed counterparts, for better and for worse. In light of this, I suggest that taking up a position of care toward such archival material recognizes and responds to that ethical responsibility. Accordingly, in the context of navigating Discovery Access's at-times unruly online database of animal footage, an important question to ask in addition to "how can we make better use of this (both in terms of access in the present and preservation for the future)?" is "how can we stage new ethical relationships to animals in and through the way we use and think about their archival images?"

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As Derrida reminds us in his seminal work *Archive Fever*, archives are always reflections of wider systems of ideological power—they are "where authority, social order are exercised."[65] As with Western society more generally, which on the whole treats animals as "givens," existing in the world for our sakes rather than their own, when animals enter archives, as both bodies and images, we submit them to anthropocentric regimes of power, where animals are figured as means to an end. When such structures are inevitably reproduced in archives, animals' epistemological alterity, their independence from the human being, is compromised, as they are fitted into anthropocentric disciplines of knowledge and power.[66] In contradistinction to this, a "counter-archive" which makes space for animal resistance to these structures, allowing unruly images to refuse anthropocentric means of understanding and appropriation, offers a challenge to our wider cultural use of and attitude toward animals. In this way, both unruly archival images and cryptozoology as a framework point outside of human epistemological constructions, by positing their own posthuman un-archiveability. Through *Lost Tapes*' unruly images, we might examine these biases and anthropocentric ideologies, these assumptions that animals exist simply for our ends, and ultimately work to take responsibility for these ideological constructions. As opposed to treating animals and their images as means to an end, we might instead consider them something we are responsible for treating ethically, by moving toward an archival ethics of care.

In our contemporary media landscape, images of animals have functionally replaced the already-diminishing place of live animal bodies in Western urban societies. Gail Davies has argued that online databases of animal images, so-called "electronic zoos," have come to replace traditional ones, even though they trade in images rather than physical bodies.[67] As Davies points out, animal bodies are now commodified based on a new division between images of animals and their physical bodies,[68] with images of animals existing within structures of intellectual rather than literal property rights,[69] yet the fundamental logic of commercial exploitation of animals remains the same. She writes,

> Zoos have lost out, unable to mask their origins in a particular type of imperial system . . . . Film-makers meanwhile have created a new empire, collecting footage of animals in archives as a way of storing value in the global networks of circulating animal images, supported by the control of copyright and the aesthetic power that their images of wild nature present. The drawing of boundaries between humans and non-humans has maintained the value of the images in the archive; their sanitized views of nature as remote from human intervention makes them universal, and ensures that they can be endlessly circulated and re-edited.[70]

This sanitization of animal utility, displacing the effects from bodies onto images, essentially removes from view the consequences of this exploitation and thus our implication as viewers within that process. Davies adds, "By constructing its empire upon the control of images of animals, television has simultaneously been able to accumulate value from the diversity of life on earth, whilst avoiding any responsibility for ameliorating the threats that this has experienced."[71]

So in asking ourselves how we should archive animals, as well as how we might want to activate those archives, according to an ethics of care that in the case of animals may de-prioritize instrumentalization and respect animal alterity according to a posthuman framework, we might endorse alternative archival modes, such as one that allows or even encourages animal images to remain unruly. As we have seen, unruly archival images exceed the bounds of our traditional modes of epistemological control of animals—what Catherine Russell has described as the "zoological gaze"[72]—as well as the historically exploited position set out for animals in our instrumental mindset within capitalist systems of labour. Indeed, to take a cue from John Berger, it remains important to acknowledge that this instrumentalized logic affects not only animals but humans as well: "This reduction of the animal, which has a theoretical as well as economic history, is part of the same process as that by which men [sic] have been reduced to isolated productive and consuming units . . . . The mechanical view of the animal's work capacity was later applied to that of workers."[73] In de-prioritizing instrumentalization in an unruly archive of animals, we might thereby work toward new perspectives and "more equitable forms of relation"[74] with our fellow animals, both human and non-human alike.[75]

Unruly animal images, in the way in which they resist the uses set out for them, thereby serve to de-anthropocentrize the archive and to invite us to consider the possibility of what a posthuman archive looks like. Here animal images are afforded a place outside their functional value to human beings, instead emerging as an animal excess. That excess invites us to respond, either by better trying to contain that excess, wrangling these archives and images more decisively into the functions we have conceived for them (as we saw with *Lost Tapes*' progression), or alternatively by adopting an attitude of openness and configuring an alternative perspective on our ethical relationships with animals. Erica Fudge has proposed a similar call to re-evaluate our relations to animals in favour of a more posthuman perspective that positions us next to animals rather than within a use-based hierarchy.[76] And as Derrida underscores, such re-evaluations of the past are always ultimately forward-pointing; he asserts that archives exist as a pledge or token for the future.[77] While the pledge unruly images offer for future reconsiderations of animal images within archival practice may not involve the total de-instrumentalization of the animal bodies we live alongside in the world, I suggest that such a reconsideration invited by the unruly animal image may still involve a crucial posthuman paradigm shift in how we think about both archives and animals.

CONCLUSIONS: AN UNRULY COUNTER-ARCHIVE

Unlike with traditional archives, which concern human beings, whose prior historical context and corresponding narrative language with which to represent them as part of that history are taken for granted, animals have no defined place in a historical archive. Apart from being assigned anthropomorphic characteristics, animals in archives are confined largely to a series of gestures that allow them to stand for their species as a whole. Accordingly, in *Lost Tapes*, we see the audiovisual archive of animals that it mobilizes consisting of an archive of bodies and gestures: animals snarling, fighting, roaring, blinking, flapping, writhing. These archived animals thereby stand on the edge of human history, as essentially ahistorical. Erica Fudge has discussed the challenges of writing a history of animals, which is inescapably always in fact our own human interpretation of and perspective on animals[78] and thus becomes inherently anthropocentric. However, she points out that it is possible to work against this anthropocentrism in a practice she calls, after Walter Benjamin, "brushing history against the grain"—she writes,

> If we can no longer assume our own status then we can no longer take the status of animals as a given. What was assumed to be natural—human dominion—is revealed instead to be manufactured, that is, ideological. Through anthropocentrism—the recognition that the only vision is the human vision, the only history a human history—we can in fact work against anthropocentrism, make it untenable.[79]

There is, therefore, a radical potential lying within an attempt to place animals as part of our history—in attempting to de-anthropocentrize the archive, by admitting a posthuman archive, or counter-archive, of animals.

This uneasy relationship of animals and history is mirrored in a related way in other counter-histories of many marginalized groups, where representation is neither easily granted nor recognized. As Cait McKinney sums up in their article on the challenges faced by the Lesbian Herstory Archives, "Much queer archival theory has celebrated LGBT archives as 'counterarchival'—and thus inherently critical—spaces that house the eccentric materials other archives might not value."[80] Thus, as with the historically marginalized and disadvantaged, those traditionally left out of history, it becomes important to question and rework hegemonic modes of writing and activating history. In the case of animals, this might take the form of, for one, an unruly counter-archive. Paula Amad, in her conceptualization of an archive of the everyday, has described a counter-archive as that which is inherently opposed to hegemonic archival methods, working as both disruptive and undisciplined, "a supplementary realm where the modern conditions of disorder, fragmentation, and contingency came to haunt the already unstable positivist utopia of order, synthesis, and totality."[81] According

to this formulation, an unruly posthuman counter-archive of animals might serve as a disruption to our traditional archival practices, especially in working to undo our common-sense assumptions about instrumentality and re-appropriation in modern digital archives, as well as human and non-human animal relations more broadly.

Archival representations of animals are everywhere to be found in contemporary digital media, currently and most prominently in the form of memes, TikToks, and supercuts. And yet animal representation is not something audiences of Western media are often given the chance to think about, as images of wildlife are by and large seamlessly integrated into Western cultural milieux. In advertisements, such as Telus's classic commercials featuring a variety of cute and cuddly critters,[82] or well-regarded nature programming such as the BBC's *Blue Planet I* and *II* (2001, 2017) and *Planet Earth* (2006), animal images are presented as naturalized (pardon the pun) and unremarkable. In distinction to this, *Lost Tapes*, as a program on the outskirts of these standard representations, offers a chance to re-evaluate this often-uncritical reliance on animal imagery in popular media, as well as our assumed ability to put it to our own anthropocentric uses. The program challenges such assumptions exactly through its unpolished, messy form, if unintentionally, such that the ruptures caused by its animal images are not eventually smoothed over. Animal excess thus remains uncontained only at the margins of our representations of animals. It is therefore within this exact type of marginal low-budget programming typified by *Lost Tapes* that we may interrogate these rupture points that open up critical questions about our use of animal imagery in popular media. In light of this observation, I believe future research would benefit from increased attention to such texts that might otherwise be ignored.

As part of cinematic and televisual history, archives of animal images have fulfilled various functions over time—as exposition, attraction, education, and record. Yet in spite of this ancillary presence in our lives and in our archives, these images have no clear place in the context of human history, as well as a limited presence in scholarly discourse. More work remains to be done to explore different mobilizations of animal audiovisual archives and the ethical relationships between human beings and archived material, especially as our perspectives continue to evolve regarding human–animal relations. It is my hope that discussions may continue to open up new and future ways of thinking about animals in the archive as well as inviting further exploration of the critical and timely potential of an unruly posthuman counter-archive.

NOTES

1. Stephanie S. Turner, "The Place of Cryptids in Taxonomic Debates," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology: Exploring Encounters with Mysterious Creatures*, ed. Samantha Hurn (London: Routledge, 2017), 20.

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2. Cryptozoological narratives also thread through other media forms, including recent novels, films, and video games. Some popular films that rely on the trope of the cryptid over the past few decades include *Anaconda* (Luis Llosa, 1997), *The Mothman Prophecies* (Mark Pellington, 2002), *The Descent* (Neil Marshall, 2005), *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* (Gore Verbinski, 2006), *The Shape of Water* (Guillermo del Toro, 2017), and *The Meg* (Jon Turteltaub, 2018).
3. The fascination with mythical beasts dates back to prehistory, as with many ancient mythologies across different cultures. Contemporary depictions of cryptids also have strong roots in the medieval bestiary phenomenon. More modern iterations include countless different types of stories, from folktales and fairy tales, circus sideshows, magazines, and video games, to name just a few. Like *Lost Tapes*, many representations from the modern era often rely on amalgamating extant animals to depict their creatures of myth, as with the monster movies in the 1930s through to the 1950s and onward that used scaled-up versions of iguanas, spiders, ants, etc. (think of *The Lost World* [Irwin Allen, 1960]), or as with P. T. Barnum's infamous Feejee Mermaid hoax, a creature on sideshow display in the mid-nineteenth century that was made up of a horrifying composite of fish and monkey. A similar thread of fascination with mythic monsters can be traced across the long legacy of *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* multimedia phenomenon, established in 1918, which to this day makes regular blog posts about supposed cryptid sightings, prompting discussions on both their website and their YouTube channel, which similarly relies upon this tradition of animal references.
4. Examples of horror/science fiction films from the 1950s that revolved around Bigfoot/Yeti include *Man Beast* (Jerry Warren, 1956), *The Snow Creature* (W. Lee Wilder, 1954), and the Hammer horror film *The Abominable Snowman* (Val Guest, 1957). A flurry of Bigfoot films also appeared in the 1970s with *The Legend of Boggy Creek* (Charles B. Pierce, 1972), *The Legend of Bigfoot* (Harry Winer, 1976), *Sasquatch, the Legend of Bigfoot* (Ed Ragozzino, 1976), and *Creature from Black Lake* (Joy N. Houck Jr., 1976), to name a few. Animated films since the 2000s in particular have popularized a more family-friendly Bigfoot/Yeti figure, including *Monsters, Inc.* (Pete Docter, 2001) *Hotel Transylvania* (Genndy Tartakovsky, 2012), *Smallfoot* (Karey Kirkpatrick, 2018), *Missing Link* (Chris Butler, 2019), and *Abominable* (Jill Culton, 2019).
5. Peter Dendle, "Cryptozoology in the Medieval and Modern Worlds," *Folklore* 117.2 (August 2006): 198.
6. For more on this, readers may find a historical overview of cryptozoological practice in Turner, "The Place of Cryptids," 12–31, and an account of the anthropologist Grover Krantz and his contributions to the early pseudoscientific explorations into cryptozoology in Brian Regal, "Entering Dubious Realms: Grover Krantz, Science, and Sasquatch," *Annals of Science* 66.1 (January 2009): 83–102.
7. Sharon Merz, "Enigmatic Bush Dwarfs of West Africa: The Case of the Siyawesi of Northwestern Benin," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology*, 120–38.
8. Bettina E. Schmidt, "Mermaids in Brazil: The (Ongoing) Creolisation of the Water Goddesses *Oxum and Iemanjá*," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology*, 157–70.
9. Penelope Bernard, "Suspending Disbelief and Experiencing the Extraordinary: How Radical Participation May Facilitate an Understanding of Aquatic Snakes and Fish-Tailed Beings in Southern Africa," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology*, 139–56.

10. Bernard, "Suspending Disbelief," 152.
11. Samantha Hurn, "Introduction," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology*, 2.
12. Martin T. Walsh and Helle V. Goldman, "Cryptids and Credulity: The Zanzibar Leopard and Other Imaginary Beings," in *Anthropology and Cryptozoology*, 54.
13. Posthumanism as a term is unwieldy and broad-ranging, but for the purposes of this discussion, I define the posthuman as a gesture beyond the human, and specifically as a move beyond anthropocentrism in line with Rosi Braidotti's seminal treatment of the subject. See especially Rosi Braidotti, "Post-Anthropocentrism: Life Beyond the Species," in *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 55–104.
14. James Leo Cahill, "A YouTube Bestiary: Twenty-Six Theses on a Post-Cinema of Animal Attractions," in *New Silent Cinema*, ed. Katherine Groo and Paul Flaig (London: Routledge, 2015), 282.
15. Kari Weil, "A Report on the Animal Turn," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 21.2 (September 2010): 2.
16. Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 150.
17. James Leo Cahill, *Zoological Surrealism: The Nonhuman Cinema of Jean Painlevé* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).
18. See other strategic formulations of anthropomorphism in Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 98–100; as well as James Leo Cahill's concept of plasmatic anthropomorphism in Cahill, *Zoological Surrealism*, 96; and more on the figurative potential of anthropomorphism in Anne Simon, "Literature and Animal Expressiveness: On the Cognitive and Ethical Aspects of Zoopoetics," in *Outside the Anthropological Machine: Crossing the Human-Animal Divide and Other Exit Strategies*, ed. Chiara Mengozzi (London: Routledge, 2021), 207–208.
19. Weil, "Report," 15.
20. This idea of the anonymous, interchangeable animal reinforces the narrative of homogeneity around animal bodies both in popular imagining and academic discourse. Kari Weil reminds us that the idea of animal rights itself, if authors are not careful to accommodate internal difference within their accounts, "might similarly entrench animals within a falsely unifying idea of 'the animal.'" Weil, 3.
21. Dendle, "Cryptozoology," 193.
22. Dendle, 199.
23. Even as *Lost Tapes* points backward into the past in order to recover prior truths represented by the pre-historical era of human animals, so too does it point forward in its drive to produce new scientific knowledge—the cryptid remains an epistemological anomaly that offers the potential to drive scientific investigation. See Turner, "The Place of Cryptids," 13.
24. The body's relationship to digital environments is treated at greater length in Drew Ayers, *Spectacular Posthumanism: The Digital Vernacular of Visual Effects* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).
25. *Lost Tapes* even crafts a glitch-ridden shot transition of a fanged beast beneath a layer of audiovisual static, a visual shorthand for its cryptids that the series reuses throughout its run.

26. Shaunak Sen, "Spectral Pixels: Digital Ghosts in Contemporary Hindi Horror Cinema," *Wide Screen* 5.1 (February 2014): 2; emphasis in original.
27. Hurn, "Introduction," 5.
28. This relationship between cryptozoology and zoology is explored in more detail in Elise Schembri, "Cryptozoology as a Pseudoscience: Beasts in Transition," *Studies by Undergraduate Researchers at Guelph* 5.1 (Fall 2011): 5–10. In the case of the discovery of the giant squid, first photographed in 2004, this animal moved from the realm of cryptozoology to enter zoology proper. See Schembri, 8.
29. Sarah O'Brien, "Why Look at Dead Animals?," *Framework* 57.1 (Spring 2016): 45; emphasis in original.
30. O'Brien, "Why Look," 45.
31. Cahill, "YouTube Bestiary," 282.
32. Jane Desmond, "Displaying Death, Animating Life: Changing Fictions of 'Liveness' from Taxidermy to Animatronics," in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 169.
33. O'Brien, "Why Look," 40.
34. Desmond, "Displaying Death," 159.
35. Paul Sheehan, "Against the Image: Herzog and the Troubling Politics of the Screen Animal," *SubStance* 37.3 (2008): 132.
36. Sheehan, "Against the Image," 133.
37. Akira Mizuta Lippit, "The Death of an Animal," *Film Quarterly* 56.1 (Fall 2002): 13.
38. Catherine Russell, *Archiveology: Walter Benjamin and Archival Film Practices* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 1.
39. Russell, *Archiveology*, 9.
40. Russell, *Archiveology*, 4.
41. Russell, *Archiveology*, 50.
42. O'Brien, "Why Look," 50.
43. John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?," in *About Looking* (New York: Vintage International, 1980), 6.
44. Berger, "Why Look," 12.
45. Berger, 25.
46. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," trans. Marc Roudebush, *Representations* 26.1 (Spring 1989): 17.
47. Juan Carlos Rodríguez, "Towards a Film Mycology?: Biodeteriorated Archival Images of Havana as Incurable-Images of the Cinematic City," *Public* 57.1 (June 2018): 175.
48. Rodríguez, "Towards a Film Mycology?," 173.
49. Sheehan, "Against the Image," 121.
50. Sheehan, 122.
51. Such is the case with Catherine Russell's application of the idea of archiveology to the gendered archive, so that images of women may be released from their narrative entrapment within colonialist and patriarchal structures. See Catherine Russell, "Awakening from the Gendered Archive: Archiveology and Critical Cultural History," *Public* 57.1 (June 2018): 38.

52. The unruly animal archival image is also connected to, though doesn't function in the same way as, animal sound archives: databases of infinitely repurposable animal sounds that are untethered from their corresponding bodies. In the case of archived animal sounds, their unruliness becomes containable because they are fundamentally abstracted—the sounds stand in for animal bodies while also working as free-floating, malleable indices. In this way, animal sounds may not contain the same degree of immutable facticity as do animal images, though the potential for "unruly" animal sounds may be a productive area to explore in future research.
53. I use the term "dialectical" to emphasize the mutual interplay between fact and fiction at work throughout the series, specifically between animals and their cryptid counterparts. The two do not only exist in tension throughout the series; they are mutually producing and resistant, and their collision results in the "clash" we see as animal excess and unruliness.
54. Further research might explore the degree to which audiences respond to heterogeneous editing patterns, though an audience study or related sociological endeavour lies outside the scope of the current discussion.
55. Further applications of the unruly image need not be limited to discussions of author intentionality—an image's resistance to its archiveological function may be ambiguous or hermeneutic and might be intentionally deployed by a filmmaker or series creator. Images' unruliness may therefore be permitted or they may be contained, depending on the context.
56. Erica Fudge, "A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals," in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 7.
57. Russell, *Archiveology*, 25.
58. Elinor Ostrom and Charlotte Hess, "A Framework for Analyzing the Knowledge Commons," in *Understanding Knowledge as a Commons: From Theory to Practice*, ed. Charlotte Hess and Elinor Ostrom (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 45.
59. Caroline Frick, *Saving Cinema: The Politics of Preservation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 171.
60. Traci Warkentin, "Dis/Integrating Animals: Ethical Dimensions of the Genetic Engineering of Animals for Human Consumption," in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, ed. Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2017), 375.
61. Weil, "Report," 13.
62. Clare Palmer, "Killing Animals in Animal Shelters," in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, 531–32.
63. Tzachi Zamir, "The Moral Basis of Animal-Assisted Therapy," in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, 555, 551.
64. See both Jennifer A. Mather, "Ethics and Care: For Animals, Not Just Mammals," *Animals* 9.1 (November 2019): 2, and Warkentin, "Dis/Integrating Animals," 381.
65. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 18, 1.
66. For more on this, see the polemic on the epistemological assimilation of animals within anthropocentric structures of language in Weil, "Report," 3–8.
67. Gail Davies, "Exploiting the Archive: And the Animals Came in Two by Two, 16mm, CD-ROM and BetaSp," *Area* 31.1 (March 1999): 55.
68. Davies, "Exploiting the Archive," 50.

69. Davies, 55.
70. Davies, 55–56.
71. Davies, 56.
72. Catherine Russell, "Zoology, Pornography, Ethnography," in *Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 139.
73. Berger, "Why Look," 13.
74. Laura McMahon and Michael Lawrence, "Introduction: Animal Lives and Moving Images," in *Animal Life and the Moving Image*, ed. Michael Lawrence and Laura McMahon (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2.
75. See also the case of where ethical relationships with animals may become based around a web of dependency, where essentially care begets care, in Daniel Engster, "Care Ethics and Animal Welfare," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 37.4 (November 2006): 524.
76. Fudge, "Left-Handed Blow," 15.
77. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 18.
78. Fudge, "Left-Handed Blow," 6.
79. Fudge, 14.
80. Cait McKinney, "Body, Sex, Interface: Reckoning with Images at the Lesbian Herstory Archives," *Radical History Review* 122.1 (May 2015): 122.
81. Paula Amad, *Counter-Archive: Film, the Everyday, and Albert Kahn's Archives de la Planéte* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 21.
82. For more information on Telus's use of animals in advertisements, see Nicole Shukin, "Telemobility: Telecommunication's Animal Currencies," in *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 131–179.

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